

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

Rajshy

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Mr. Arnold Beichman

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Dear Arnold:

Sorry I misdirected my letter to Stanford; I had thought you were in residence there through the end of the academic year. You certainly could not find two more spectacular places to spend your time than British Columbia and Palo Alto.

I was interested to read in your letter that you are doing a major review of John Ranelagh's book. I have read the parts pertaining to the last twenty years rather carefully, but have paid less attention to his discussion of the first half of the Agency's history.

The several pages in which he quotes me in the final chapter are, to my regret, drawn exclusively from an informal talk I gave to the Association of Former Intelligence Officers last year, in which they asked me to address changes or trends in intelligence. The speech was off the record and I did not devote anything like the time to it that I did, for example, to the speech I gave at Harvard last February on the University and CIA. In fact, I did not even have a text, but just some notes. In any event, Ranelagh accurately reports what I said in that talk, and his accuracy in such a relatively unimportant matter would suggest that he has taken equal care in other areas as well.

At the same time, his analysis of some of the things I said betrays a woeful lack of understanding of how our government works. For example, the notion that our effort to address issues affecting other agencies of government is an attempt to win bureaucratic allies reflects ignorance of the fact that an independent, outside view is not welcomed by any bureaucracy. (Indeed, changing that attitude at CIA has been a continuing challenge.) Far from making bureaucratic allies, CIA's work in new areas -- such as on the Third World debt problem -- has, in fact, brought nothing but controversy and conflict with powerful bureaucracies in town.

More broadly, I think his chapter on the period 1980-85 (which I have heard was added in a rush at the insistence of his publisher in order to improve sales) is not very good and does serious injustice to Bill Casey -- as does the title of the book. As far as I'm concerned, the book significantly understates the long term impact that Bill has had on the Agency. Ranelagh is just wrong, for example, when on page 689 he